

MEDIA ADVISORY

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Arkansas Guard Preparing to Deploy Soldiers and Aircraft to Southwest Border ***~Soldiers to assist the Nation's Border Patrol***

ROBINSON MANEUVER TRAINING CENTER, N. Little Rock, Ark.--The Arkansas National Guard is preparing to send aircraft and Soldiers to the Nation's Southwest Border within days in support of operations being conducted by Border Patrol agents.

The Arkansas National Guard is sending two UH-72 Lakota helicopters and approximately 10 Soldiers in support of agencies operating in southern Border States. The Border Patrol will remain the lead federal agency and the Arkansas Guardsmen will fall under control of the Governor in their area of operations.

"Arkansans have always been quick to step up when our nation calls, and this time is no different," said Governor Asa Hutchinson. "I informed Homeland Security last month that the Arkansas National Guard would provide border support if requested, which they have done."

Arkansas Guardsmen will not perform law enforcement duties. Soldiers will use their skills and equipment to enhance surveillance and reconnaissance abilities and to provide increased detection and tracking capabilities to the lead agencies.

"The Arkansas National Guard is uniquely qualified to assist the Border Patrol in reconnaissance operations," said Maj. Gen. Mark Berry, the Adjutant General for the Arkansas National Guard. "Our Soldiers and Airmen have been providing these same capabilities to combatant commanders and local law enforcement agencies for years."

This is not the first time that Arkansas has participated in missions along our Nation's southwest border. The Arkansas National Guard deployed troops between June 2006 and July 2008 in support of Operation Jump Start when we provided more than 750 Soldiers and Airmen in support of the Border Patrol.

"I am grateful to our Soldiers and Airmen for assisting in this operation and am confident they will represent Arkansas well, just as they have in times past," said Hutchinson.

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